Great Speech of Gen. Sickles on the Battlefield July 2.

THE THIRD CORPS,

And the Gallant Part it Took in the Mighty Struggle.

THRILLING STORY where he arrived early on the morning of the

Or Deeds of Patriotic Daring and Lofty Heroism.

[References in parenthesis—"C, W," mean the report of the Joint Committee of Congress on the Conduct of the War, 1864; "O. R," mean the Offi-

SITUATION IN JUNE, 63-MILITARY, POLITI-CAL, MORAL.

The Army of the Potomac had lost the stroy all these detachments on their flank, of the Potomac was largely officered by men who had not accepted the Proclamation of Emancipation, as expressing the policy and purpose of the war!

taking ground that for military and political of victory! reasons the success of the North was impossi- The combat of July 1, at Oak Ridge, was one the war made it impossible to prolong the great battles and great results. Neither Meade, struggle. It was apprehended that in the ab- nor Reynolds, nor Buford sence of volunteers bounties and conscription could not fill up the losses caused in our armies by death, disease and battle! And we had not Meade had decided (p. 354, C.W.) that he would yet found a commander who inspired at once | fall back to the line of Pipe Creek and take up

Public opinion was more and more divided as to the expediency of prosecuting the war! It with instructions "to hold the enemy in check and fall slowly back." (p. 356, C. W.) It was to see at a glance all the disconragements that weighed him down in his great task? Said one | concentration was Chambersburg. The object who saw Lincoln in those sad days:

I shall never forget the shock that his presence gave us at that time. Not more ghastly and rigid was his dead face as he iny in his collin than on that never-to-be-forgotten night. His introverted look, and his half-staggering guilt, were like those of a man walking in his sieep. He seemed literally bending under the weight of his burdens. To the suggestion that we desired from him some word of aconsagement, something to cheer and stimulate, his sad and blant reply.

Our burden outweighed our hopes. In these auxious days of June, 1863, Lee should find the position unsuitable and the adcrossed the Potomac on his second invasion of vantages on the side of the enemy, he should the North. The President called upon all the report to me the nearest position in the immeloyal States, and especially those nearest the disteneighborhood of Gettysburg where a conseene of the impending conflict, to send their | centration of the army would be more advanreserves of militia to the front, for even the | tageous than at Gettysburg." shortest periods of service, and a small army of these fresh levies was rapidly assembled on the | whether we would concentrate at Emmittsbanks of the Susquehanna, under Couch and burg, or Pipe Creek, or Gettysburg, or some-Baidy Smith, at Harrisburg, supposed to be in where in the neighborhood of Gettysburg. the direction of Lee's march. Lee's army

BELIEVED PISELF INVINCIBLE. It had won many signal victories. It was stronger than ever in numbers, equipment, organization and discipline. It was led by able the enemy's advance in check as they were corps and division commanders. Lieut.-Gen. about to occupy Gettysburg. Reynolds, with

Never before or since have I witnessed such intense enthusiasm as that which prevailed throughcheers re-echoed all along the line. Our forces marched undisturbed to Chambersburg. I found Gen. Lee in the same buoyant spirits which pervaded his magnificent army. After the ordinary saturations, he exchained: "Ah! General, the capany is a long time finding on the left. Hancock met Meade at Taney-town at 11 o'clock on the morning of July 1. He says: "Gen. Meade told me all his plans. He said he had made up his mind to fight. out the entire Confederate army. Extravagant enemy is a long time finding us; if he does not succeed soon we must go in search of him!"

not as far off as Lee and his Lieutenants sup. and Eleventh Corps, "was really a mask, in posed. Lee's eavalry, under Stuart, were on a order to allow this movement (occupying the picule, and falled to discover Hooker crossing the Potemac at Edwards's Ferry. Jenkins's Cavalry Brigade was in advance, levying contributions at York and other towns. Suddenly Lee commands a halt in his march | spite of the plans of Meade and Lee.

to Harrisburg! What is the matter? He Iorees at Gettysburg.

Why at Gettysburg? Ewell had reconnoitered required by the issue of the impending battle, ters. Of course, Butterfield and Warren and and if Lee were quick in his concentration he might choose a battleground as advantageous to him as Fredericksburg. And so it would have been if bold and sagacious Buford had not stood in the way with a division of cavalry the counterpart of himself.

Buford met Lee's advance under Ewell at Oak Eidge. So resolutely was the ground contested by Buford, who dismounted his men. that he held his own until Wadsworth, with the First Division of the First Corps, came up in support, under Reynolds in person, who nded the left wing of the Army of the Potomac.

The enemy, although much superior in numhers, was checked. The other divisions, under Doubleday and Robinson, were soon in position. Reynolds had surveyed the whole field from the summit of the Seminary and quickly made dispositions. Instantly placing himself on his line of battle, he sent for Howard to hurry up with the Lieventh Corps and dispatched couriers and staff officers to Sickles, who was at Emmitisburg with the Third Corps, unfortunately 10 miles nway.

BEYNOLDS FELL MORTALLY WOUNDED early in the battle, but not until he had so far seconded the stand made by Buford, that our enemy made no attempt to dislodge them.

The buttle of Oak Ridge on July 1 gave to report, p. 27, C. R.):

The onemy occupied the point which Gen. Eweil yearly weakened and exhausted by a long and bloody struggle, to overwhelming numbers of fresh

These fresh troops were Birney's Division of Meanwhile the Third Corps was under orders | Westminster. to "bold Emmittsburg at all hazards." Gen.

compelled to give him battle there.

Meade to come to Gettysburg with all his army. Sickles had reached the field with two brigades

of Birney's Division (Ward's and Graham's), three batteries, and two regiments of Stannard's Vermonters, belonging to the First Corps, leav-ing De Trobriand with his own and Burling's Brigade of the Second Division and Smith's New York battery to hold Emmittsburg. Humphreys followed with two brigades. It is remarkable that this forced march of 10 miles of the Third Corps-a march made

WITHOUT ORDERS AND AGAINST ORDERSto help the over-matched troops under Howard is nowhere acknowledged by either Meade or Howard in their reports of the battle !- although Gon. Monde expressed to Gen. Sickles his approval of his action, in a private note, on the same night. Meade sent orders to De Trobriand to follow the Corps to Gettysburg,

The march of the advance brigades of the Third Corps on the flank of the enemy-without an attack-without annihilation, is one of the strangest incidents of the movement. Yet more remarkable is the circumstance that the trains of the First Corps, guarded by the Vermont brigade, under Stannard, were found by Sickles parked on the road to Gettysburg. Sickles ordered the trains to the rear, and brought those splendid regiments of Vermonters, with cial Reports of the battle, made by the officer his column, to Gettysburg, where they fought so heroically and so effectively on the last day. These trains and their escort had likewise es-

caped capture! Of course it was easy enough

for the enemy to reach out and capture and de-

Peninsular campaign, Pope's campaign, Burn-side's campaign, Chancellorsville! The Army ment of his columns that it was not until the night of the 28th of June that Lee learned from a scout that Hooker had crossed the Potomac, and was already on his right flank and rear. The triumphal march of Lee on Harris-Politically, the situation was discouraging. burg was instantly countermanded. Gettys-England and France were hostile to the Union, | burg was chosen as his point of concentration, waiting for suitable pretexts to intervene, -or | and especially for its defensive resources. Lee to recognize the Frathern Confederacy. Public | did not intend to hazard a general engagement opinion was much estranged by the Conscrip- -that is to say, a decisive battle-so far away tion Act of Congress,-resistance was openly from his base, unless attacked by us. The galcounseled! The Proclamation of Emancipa- ant stand of Buford and the stubborn fighting tion, the organization of colored troops and of the First and Eleventh Corps gave us the kindred measures had alienated large numbers | choice of position on Lee's battlefield, and of people. An impression-almost a belief-was | forced him to attack. His army was confident

ble. It was feared that the enormous cost of of those accidents in war which determine

KNEW THAT GETTYSBURG

was the destination of Lee's army. On July 1 the Government, the people and the armies a defensive position, threatening Lee's flank with confidence in his ability to lead us to vic- and rear and forcing him to attack. (p. 356, C. W.) Reynolds and Howard were ordered to Gettysburg with the First and Eleventh Corps, of the movement of our army "in this direction," says Gon. Meade, "has been accom-plished;" that is to say, "the relief of Harrisburg and the prevention of the enemy's intended invasion of Pennsylvania beyond the Susquelianna." (p.355, C. W.)

Meade knew nothing of Gettysburg. He says that when he ordered Hancock there to recon-"I have no word of encouragement to give," was noiter, "I furthermore instructed him that upon his arrival at Gettysburg-a place I had Lincoln was the impersonification of his peo- never seen in my life, and had no more knowlple and his cause! All seemed dark before us. of than you have now" (addressing the Committee on the Conduct of the War), "if he

Thus it was uncertain on the 1st of July Buford, Reynolds, Howard and Sickles, all drifted to the battlefield as by a common intuition. Buford, with his division,-or rather a part of it. for the reserve brigade under Merritt was at Mechanicstown with his trains,-held the First Corps, resisted their advance, while Howard, in support, took position on Cemetery Ridge, and Sickles made a forced march from He said he had made up his mind to fight a battle on what is known as Pipe Creek;" and Hooker and the Army of the Potomac were | that Reynolds at Gettysburg, with the First line of Pipe Creek) to go on in his rear." Yet arranged Gen. Meade's plans as to hazard their the route. After some delay the Major-General accident—which sometimes decides the fate of successful execution. My statement is that no commanding returned and directed a counter-Empires—led to the collision of the advance—plan of battle whatever had been promulgated beyond the point at which we had before halted, guard of the two armies near Gettysburg, in spite of the plans of Meade and Lee. to any corps commander, or to any officer of the and thence under cover of the woods to the right of our line of battle.

This is not said in disparagement of Gen. learns that Hooker is moving on his flank and Meade. Not at all. Nor is it intended as a on our left flank was rear, threatening his communications. Lee: criticism of his action. He had been assigned alarmed, directs the concentration of all his to command only three days before, in the presence of the enemy, on the eve of a great battle. He had no opportunity to inform him- of the enemy, reported them to Gen. Meade, that position a few days before. It was admir- self of the movements of the enemy, nor of the and asked instructions as to the formation of able for the invading army, because it afforded plans of Hooker, besides such communications his line and the positions for his artillery. facilities for advance or retreat as might be as were made to him by the staff at headquar-



BREVET MAJ.-GEN. CHAS. K. GRAHAM. forces under Howard were enabled to take their Hunt, all soldiers of distinguished ability and position on Cemetery Ridge, from which the large experience, gave him the benefit of their knowledge of the situation, but that

WAS NECESSARILY IMPERFECT. Howard the choice of position at Gettysburg. because so much depended on the plans of the and was worth all it cost. Gen. Lee says (Lee's enemy until Meade should form his own plan of campaign.

Meade's plan had not been formed as late as designed to asize; the strong position which the account the account not be attacked without hour he telegraphed Gen. Hallock:

3 o'clock in the afternoon of July 2. At that could march through an open woodland pasture around Round Top, and assault the enemy in flank If net attacked, and I can get any positive infor-

mation of the enemy which will justify me in so doing, I shull attack. If I find it hazardous to do so, or am satisfied the enemy is endeavoring to the Third and a division of the Twelfth Corps. | move to my rear and interpose between me and the Third and a division of the Twelfth Corps. | Washington, I shall fail back to my supplies at Half an hour after that dispatch was written

Meade had sent instructions to Humphreys, the battle of Gettysburg began. All the morncommanding Sickles's Second Division, to re- ing the enemy had been massing his forces connecter the ground near Emmittsburg and on our left for the purpose of turning that flank Esport upon it as a battlefield. Gen. Mende | and occupying the Round Tops, the key of our had, on the morning of the 1st, sent a circular position, and the clevated sidge extending to order to all the corps commanders, indicating | the Emmittsburg road in advance of Cemetery Pipe Creek as the position where he would con- Ridge. This was the position taken by the centrate, confident that the enemy would be Third Corps, and to which Gen. Meade's attention had been repeatedly invited during the Gen. Lee chose his own point of concentra-tion and Buford accepted his challenge, which the enemy had been fixed upon this as their thus forcing Hood to attack us on our front. was seconded by Reynords. Accident, so po-tent in war, overruled the plans of Meade, their disposition for battle. On our side we drifting him to a position chosen by the enemy | had no order of battle and no plan for attack | and giving to Meade the enormous advantages or defense. (p. 437-8, C. W.) Gen. Meade had

Warren. Gen. Meade says: Gen. Warren reported to me that he did not think an attack advisable from our right flank: I therefore abandoned that attack and waited for the Sixth Corps to arrive, intending to move the Fifth Corps over to the left (p. 438, C. W.), as I did, and then, if the enemy did not attack me, to make an attack myself from the left.

It therefore appears: 1. That our concentration at Gettysburg was not pursuant to any plan of campaign, but was the result of an accidental collision of detached bodies of troops coming together on the flanks of the two armies. 2. That the battle began in the afternoon of July 2 before any plan of battle had been formed or promulgated on our side, and before any disposition of our forces had been made to repel the attack made by the enemy, except the dispositions made by Sickles. Gen. Hunt says (p. 449, C. W.): At that time (11 a. m., July 2, when Gen. Meade

sent him to examine the line Sickies wanted to oc-cupy) I did not know anything of the intention of Gen. Meade, whether it was to occupy a line with a view to attack, or a defensive line, or a defensive and offensive line. As we left the room I asked Gen. Sickles what his idea was? Gen. Hunt was the Chief of Artillery of the army, and would, of course, be charged with

the disposition of the artillery for battle, as

soon as the order of battle should be determined by the commanding General. I ask attention to these facts, because it bas been often represented that Gen. Meade had formed a plan of battle on the left, and had assigned to Gen. Sickles a position on that flank,

of a defensive line in which the enemy was compelled to attack him.

Hancock, Slocum, Howard and Sickles urged decided on the morning of the 2d to attack the enemy on our right, but his plan was given up on the representations of Gen. Slocum and Gen.

position from which, if he could be driven, it was enemy on our right, but his plan was given up in assailing the more elevated ground beyond, and thus enable us to reach the crest of the ridge. (Lee,

street, was the position taken by the Third Corps. Says Gen. Lee: It was determined to make the principal attack upon the enemy's left, and endeavor to gain a position from which it was thought that our artillery could be brought to bear with effect. Longstreet was directed to place the divisions of McLaws and Hood on the right of Hill, partially enveloping the enemy's left, which he was to drive in, four of

This position of ours, in front of Gen. Long-

Anderson's Brigades supporting him on the left. (Lee's Report, p. 27, C. R.) It is seen in the foregoing extracts that on the 2d of July the enemy knew distinctly what they wanted to do, and now we will see how they undertook their work. They proposed to envelope and drive in our left, held by the Third Corps, Buford's cavalry having been withdrawn and sent to Westminster. Longstreet says (Longstreet, p. 57, C. R.):

Engineers sent out by the commanding General and myself guided us by a road which would have completely disclosed the move. Some delay ensued in seeking a more concealed route. Gen. Pendleton, Lee's Chief of Artillery, says (Pendleton, p. 51, C. R.):

Longstreet was advancing by the ravine road, as most out of view, time having been lost in attempt-ing another, which proved objectionable because exposed to observation Gen. Kershaw, of McLaws's Division, says (Kershaw, p. 75, C. R.):

We were directed to move under cover of the hills toward the right, with a view to flanking the signed to Gen. Sickles a position on that flank, from which he advanced upon the enemy too soon and too far, and that this advance so dis-

MAJ.-GEN. DANIEL E. SICKLES.

except to the Third Corps and its commander, | conceal his preparations for the attack on the

No reason has ever been given except that it gineers and Chiefs of Artillery, had carefully

was sent to Westminster, our base of supplies, to refit! Can it be supposed that, with an in-

tention on the part of Gen. Meade to attack the enemy, or in the expectation of an attack by and an attack in force upon our left. The

the enemy on his left flank, he would order troops of the enemy had been placed in posi-

Buford's splendid division of cavalry to the rear to refit? And what is more, order it away from the left flank, where it was in the best let us see what dispositions had been made by

formed Gen. Halleck, the Commander-in-Chief, ed, were unoccupied. Not a regiment nor a bat-

at Washington, at 3 o'clock in the afternoon of tery had been sent to occupy these strongholds.

the 2d of July, that if "satisfied the enemy is The Fifth Corps, which after the battle was in

endeavoring to move to my rear and interfere | progress was sent to hold Round Top and Little

between me and Washington, I shall fall back | Round Top, had been all day in reserve on the

to my supplies at Westminster." At that mo- right. No positions had been selected for our

ment such a demonstration towards his rear artillery, on the left. Buford's Division of

this was the purpose of Longstreet's attack our left flank, had been sent to the rear to refit

(p. 357, C. W., Report to Meade, July 1). This | C. W.) I made personal reports to him at his

and guard our trains.

I asked for orders.

who had informed himself of the movements | position of the Third Corps.

We see that the enemy in our front, on our

the 2d of July, under cover of the woods, to

THIS ASSAULT WAS PREPARED

with the deliberation, skill and secresy charac-

corps commander. On our side no preparations

were made to meet an attack on our left flank,

Lee, Longstreet and McLaws, and their En-

Round Top and Little Round Top, the keys

I kept Gen. Meade constantly advised of the

situation on the left flank. (Sickles, p. 297-8,

relieve, had not been in position, but had been

sist such an attack as appeared to be imminent.

I HAD NO ORDERS.

did not permit him to do so. I asked Gen.

of our position, as Gen. Meade afterward learn-

except the dispositions made by Gen. Sickles.

plan of battle, but we had none. Lee's attack

A SURPRISE TO ALL OF THE ARMY

The next fact to be weighed is one of great

significance. Buford's Division of Cavalry was

on our left flank on the morning of the 2d of

July. It was sent away to Westminster. Why?

It will be remembered that Gen. Meade in-

service, either for attack or defense!

upon the Third Corps, on our left flank.

Corps of the Union army, says:

Because his own left flank was

Gen. Lee says, in his official report:

from that direction.

Hancock had pointed out that the position

on Cemetery Ridge was one "easily turned."

was obvious enough to the enemy. Lieut.-

Gen. Hood, who commanded on the right of

the enemy, and therefore in front of the Third

I arrived in front of the hights of Gettysburg on the morning of the 2d of July, \* \* \* (Hood's "Advance and Retreat," p. 57.) I sent forward some of my picked Texan socuts to escertain the

position of the enemy's extreme left flank. They

oun reported to me that it rested upon Round Top

Mountain; that the country was open, and that I

and rear; that their trains were parked in rear of

The situation presented an occasion for one of

those interesting and beautiful moves upon the chess-board of war, to perform which I had often

grand results achieved by the immortal Jackson in similar manuvers; I had seen his corps made equal to 10 times its numbers by a sudden attack on the enemy's rear, and I hoped in this instance to be able to profit by the teaching of my illustrious

MENACED BY THE THIRD CORPS.

The enemy held a high and commanding ridge, along which he had massed a large amount of ar-

illery. (Lee, p. 18, C. R.)
In front of Gen, Longstreet the enemy held

possible position to render the most effective | Gen. Meade.

Gen. Meade told me about 11 o'cleck that Gen. Sickles, who was there at the time, wished me to examine his line, or the line that he wished to oc-cupy; and Gen. Meade wished me to go with Gen. Sickles and examine the line. I think he added that Gen. Sickles had no good position for his artil-lery. At that time I did not know anything of the ntention of Gen. Meade-whether it was to occupy a line with a view to attack, or a defensive line, or a defensive and offensive line. I asked Gen. Sickles what his idea was. \* \* \* I returned to headquarters and went in and made a report, very briefly, to Gen. Meade. I stated to him that I had examined the line; that, so far as it was a line for troops to occupy, taken by itself, it was a very good line; but before putting any troops on it, or occupying it, I would advise him to examine it for himself; that I would not give any advice in the matter. I did this because I did not know Gen. Meade's intentions, and I supposed he would soon be out there and examine it for himself if he thought it necessary. Feeling anxious about the position of Gen. Sickles, I returned directly towards the po sition he wanted his right to occupy. On approach ing it Capt. Randolph, who commanded the artillery of the Third Corps, came riding towards me stating that he was glad I had come; that he was ordered to put a couple of batteries in a peach orchard there and wished me to select the position. I asked if Gen. Sickles had ordered it, and he said yes. The skirmishers were already engaged. I dismounted and went in with him, bringing us under a warm musketry fire. I told him if the batteries were to be placed there, the place he had selected was as good a position as he could find; pointed out another position for another battery, and sent immediately to the artillery reserve for some rifled batteries, as I saw the enemy's artillery moving in heavy force around our left, and beyond the reach of our smoothbores. As soon as I had given these instructions I started back immediately to find Gen. Sickles. On approaching him I saw he was in conversation with Gen. Meade. I supposed. of course, that Gen. Meade had come out there and had approved of his occupying that line. I there-fore returned to Capt. Randolph and assisted him in putting his batteries in position, when we were opened upon by a heavy artillery fire at close range, from this strip of wood in front of Gen. Sickles's new line. (Hunt, p. 450, C. W.) Gen. Meade says: About 3 p. m. I rode out to the extreme left to await the arrival of the Fifth Corps and to post it, when I found that Maj.-Gen. Sickles, command-

indicate our positions on the left. Gen. Meade

such as to make it inconvenient for him to go.

Gen. Hunt, Chief of Artillery, was present, and

not busy, and I requested Gen. Meade to send

him, and to this request Gen. Meade consented.

Gen. Hunt says, in his testimony before the

(Sickles, p. 297-8, C. W., and Tremaine.)

Committee on the Conduct of the War:

replied that Gen. Warren's occupations were

ing the Third Corps, (Meade, p. 43, O. E.,) not fully apprehending the instructions in regard to the position to be occupied, had advanced, or rather was in the act of advancing his corps some half a mile or three quarters of a mile in front of the line of the Second Corps, on the prolongation of which it was designed his corps should rest. Having found Maj. Gen. Siekles I was explaining to him that he was too far in advance, and discussing with him the propriety of withdrawing, when the enemy opened upon him with several batteries in his front and immediately brought forward columns of infantry and made a most vigorous assault. The Third Corps sustained the shock most heroically. Troops from the Second Corps were immediately sent by Maj.-Gen. Hancock to cover the right flank of the tunately arrived and took position on the left of the Third, Maj.-Gen. Sykes commanding, immediately sending a force to occupy the Round Top Ridge, where a most furious contest was maintained, the enemy making desperate but unsuccessful efforts

Notwithstanding the stubborn resistance of the Third Corps under Maj.-Gen. Birney (Maj.-Gen. Sickles having been wounded early in the action), the superiority of numbers of the enemy enabling him to outflank the corps in its advanced position, Gen. Birney was compelled to fall back and reform behind the line originally designed to be held. In the meantime, perceiving the great exertions of the enemy, the Sixth Corps, under Maj. Gen. Sedgwick, and a part of the First Corps, together with detechance to four the Second and from the Fifth Corps had been ordered to be in readiness to support me.

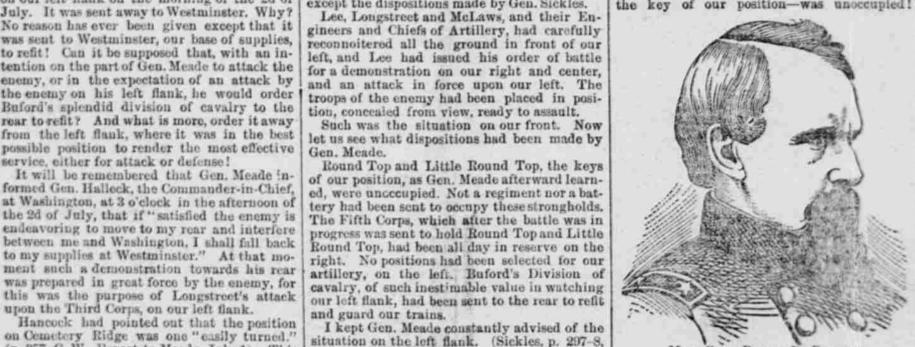
Gen. Humphreys says (Humphreys, p. 525, O. R.): gether with detachments from the Second Corps, were all brought up at different periods and suc-ceeded, together with the gallant resistance of the Fifth Corps in checking and finally repulsing the assault of the enemy, who retired in confusion and disorder about sunset, and ceased any further efforts on the extreme left. (Meade, p. 43, O. R.) During the heavy assault upon our extreme left, portions of the Twelfth Corps were sent as reinforcements. Before analyzing this description of the battle of July 2, it will be convenient and proper

to point out one or two errors of fact of more or 1. Gen. Meade states that Gen. Sickles was wounded early in the action. Gen. Sickles was | ing the troops making the advance, that Gen. wounded about 6 o'clock, so says Gen. Birney in his official report to Gen. Meade. Of course, Gen. Birney knew when the command of the corps was turned over to him by Gen. Siekles, who confirms Gen. Birney's statement in his testimony before the Committee on the Con-

duct of the War. Gen. Meade says the action began soon after 3 o'clock in the afternoon. THREE HOURS OF SUCH FIGHTING

as was seen on the left that day, especially in those three hours when the enemy were fresh and strong in their assaults, and before our supports got into position, cannot justify the statement that Sickles was wounded early in the action. Besides, Gen. Meade was notified by an Aid-de-Camp sent to him soon after 6 o'clock by Gen. Sickles, that in consequence of wounds he had turned over the command of the Third Corps to Gen. Birney. 2. Gen. Meade states that at the beginning

of the action, "Troops from the Second Corps were immediately sent by Maj. Gen. Hancock to cover the right flank of the Third Corps." left, was masking his forces and manuvering on This is an error. The right flank of the Third Corps needed no cover or support. It was not attacked. It was on the left flank of the Third Corps where support was necessary, because it was there that the enemy pressed his assaults, and it was precisely there, on our left, that teristic of Longstreet, perhaps Lee's ablest | Gen. Hancock, at my request, sent Caldwell's gallant division of the Second Corps. And why did I ask this support? Because Round Topthe key of our position-was unoccupied!



headquarters. I pointed out to him that Gen. Hancock says (Hancock, p. 406, C. W. Geary's Division, which I had been ordered to apon this point: One of my divisions (Gen. Caldwell's) was sent massed near me; that I had not received any over to the left of Gen. Sickles; but it was sent to definite orders as to the disposition of my report to Gen. Sykes, and it was posted. I believe, command, which was massed to the left of Hauby one of his staff officers. I imagine that the reason it was ordered to report to Gen. Fykes was cock, a part of the First Division, extending that after Gen. Sickles advanced, Gen. bykes was through the low ground in the direction of ordered to hold Round Top, and probably his own Round Top; that the concentration of the enemy on their right (Sickles, p. 297-8, C. W.), developed by my reconnoitering, confirmed by command should arrive. In fact, I was told at the Birney's scouts and the report of Gen. Berdan, time that the division would be returned to me their line, and were badly exposed to our attack | who had unmasked the enemy by the fire of his riflemen, afforded the strongest proof of but it became involved in the fight and fought there the design of the enemy to turn our left flank; all the afternoon. The enemy succeeded late in the that our left seemed to me our most assailable afternoon in turning the left of the Third Corps by desired an opportunity. (p. 283, Hood's "Advance and Retreat") I urgently appealed for authority to turn the Federal left at Round Top Mountain. I had beheld with admiration the noble deeds and sist such an attack as appeared to be imminute. passing between it and Round Top Mountain making the attack upon that flank of the Third Corps, forced it back. Gen. Gibbon, of my command, had sent out two regiments and a battery to connect the right of Gen. Sickles with our line. There was a little brick house in front of our line, which seemed to be a good point to rest the right (of Sickles) upon, and in order to strengthen Gen.
Sickles, he sent out these (two) regiments and a
battery. (Hancock, p. 406, C. W.) \* \* \* Detachments of the Twelth Corps came over from the I did not receive any orders. I found that my belief as to the purpose of the enemy to turn Why did not Hood execute this movement? sour left was not concurred in at headquarters. right, and also greater detachments of the First I remonstrated against sending away Buford's | Corps came up.

Division of Cavalry, urging its value as a Gen. Humphreys, who commanded my right protection of our left from surprise, and division (Second), says in his report: the great importance of Buford's personal presence on that part of our line. I asked the great importance of Buford's personal presence on that part of our line. I asked engaged with the enemy's infantry, which in my Gen. Meade to go over the ground on the front merely made demonstrations, but did not

left and examine it. He said his engagements | drive in my pickets. There is not a word in Gen. Humphreys's re- 2. That Round Top, the key of our position, to me, at any time, that road was to be abased to be abased

Meade to send Gen. Warren, Chief of Engi- port showing that his right was at any moment was unoccupied. 3. That Sickles at once, when of the battle neers, with me, to make a reconnoissance, and

IN THE LEAST DANGER.

3. Gen. Meade says in his report that he found when he rode out to the extreme left, about 3 in the afternoon-Maj.-Gen. Sickles, commanding the Third Corps, (Meade, p. 43, O. R.,) had advanced, or rather was in

the act of advancing his corps some half a mile or three-quarters of a mile in front of the line of the Second Corps, on the prolongation of which it was designed his corps should rest.

of the intentions of Gen. Meade.

How could the Chief of Ar zealous as he was, advise Gen. Gen. Siekles did not advance and take any position "in front of the line of the Second Corps." (Birney, p. 481, O. R.) Gen.

Birney, in his official report to Gen. Meade, states precisely the position of the advance line. My line was formed, with Ward on the left, resting on the mountain (Round Top Ridge or Devil's Den), De Trobriand in the center, and Graham on

my right, in the Peach Orchard, with his right on the Emmittsburg road.

Gen. Humphreys, in his official report, describes his position as follows: Shortly after midday I was ordered to form my structions "been communicated to Gen. Sick-

division in line of battle, my left joining the right of the First Division of the Third Corps, and my right resting opposite the left of Gen. Caidwell's Division of the Second Corps, which was massed on



A. A. GEN. HENRY E. TREMAIN. That is to say, it distinctly appears from these reports of my division commanders, that Second Corps; " but that, on the contrary, my advance of the left of the Second Corps-en | seem to believe.

4. Nor is the statement accurate, that Gen. Third Corps (Meade, p. 43, O. R.), and soon after 4. Nor is the statement accurate, that Gen. the assault commenced the Fifth Corps most foradvancing his corps some half a mile or three-quarters of a mile." Gen. Birney says Birney, you had taken up with your corps. At the same p. 481, O. R.), referring to the attack made on the left by the enemy on his front:

> Communicating this important information to Maj.-Gen. Sickles, I was ordered by that officer to change my front to meet the attack. I did this by advancing my left 500 yards and swinging around the right so as to rest on the Emmittsburg road at the Peach Orchard. He also informed me that a division from the Second and from the Fifth Corps

> About 4p. m., in compliance with Gen. Sickles's order, I moved my division forward, so that the first line ran along the Emmittsburg road a short distance behind the crest upon which that road

Gen. Carr, in his report, says (Carr, p. 537, At 4:18 p. m., by order of Gen. Humphreys, I advanced my line 300 yards to the crest of a hill, and t the same time detailed 100 men from the 16th Mass, to occupy an old building in an orchard on

So that it plainly appears from the reports of Gens. Biruey, Humphreys and Carr, command-

the left of my line.



MAJ.-GEN. ANDREW A. HUMPHREYS. Mende is inaccurate in his statement that Maj .-

of the line of the Second Corps. The advance on the right was 300 yards-about one-sixth of cupy the strong position on Round Top Ridge, Smith's battery.

tion designed to be occupied by the Third Corps had been misapprehended by Gen. Sickles, and not executed. This is a matter that has been much insisted upon, and should | Camp, reports:

ington, as follows:

endeavoring to move to my year and interpose be- chiefly on your own judgment. tween me and Washington, I shall fall back to my | I recall my interview with Gen. Reynolds shortly supplies at Westminster.

enemy began his threatened movement on our rear, by attacking our left flank-my position. They were bivouncked on the left, where they It is plain, therefore, that when the battle of could be most readily called upon. They were the the second day began, at 2 o'clock on July 2, extreme left of our army. Their line of march was Gen. Meade had formed no plan of battle. the Emmittsourg road, on which road were their All was doubtful, contingent, undetermined. Of course he could not give me instructions which had been left by you at Emmittaburg, and until he had formed his own phins-whether were ordered up by Gen. Meade on the 2d. This to attack or defend, or move back to his sup- was the situation on the morning of the second day plies at Westminster. Gen. Warren says: right) I advised Gen. Mende not to attack in that reporting the situation and to obtain such in-

direction, because of the character of the ground. Soon afterwards I rode out with Gen. Meade to were familiar with the ground (as I had been beexamine the left of our line, where Gen. Sicitles | cause of my experience of the previous day and was. His troops could hardly be said to be in night it was clear that the opportunities for attack position. There seemed to be some doubt whether on your left would not be lost by Gen. Lee. Should be demonstrate in that direction before your trains ridge in the rear. \* \* However, when we got and detuchments came up, their safety would be on the ground the enemy were just about attacking, and Gen. Sickles immediately began to arrange his troops on the advanced line. I suppose that was about the only thing that could be done at that of the second day of the battle was, whether the time. I then went, by Gen. Meade's direction, to Emmittsburg road should be kept by you, from time. I then went, by Gen. Meade's direction, to what is called Bald Top (Round Top), and from that point could see the enemy's lines of battle. I sent word to Gen. Mende that we would at once have to occupy that piace very strongly. (Warren, p. 377,

It thus appears from the testimony of the Chief of Engineers of Gen. Mende's staff: 1.

the enemy attacked, "began to arrange his troops on the advanced line"—the only thing to be done. You remember what Hunt says: Gen. Meade told me that Gen. Siekles, who was there at the time, wished me to examine his line, or the line that he wanted to occupy. I think he added that Gen. Sickles had no good position for his artillery. At that time I did not know anything

How could the Chief of Artillery, able and zealous as he was, advise Gen. Sickles as to the position for his troops on the left, or as to positions for his artillery, when the Chief of Artillery knew nothing of the plans or purposes of the Commanding General, on the threshold of the buttle?

What, then, were the "instructions in regard to the position to be occupied" by the Third Corps, which Gen. Sickles had not fully apprehended? Neither the Chief of Engineers nor the Chief of Artillery knew anything of the plans of Gen. Mende, nor of the positions "descigned to be held" on the left by the Third Corps. When and by whom had these "in-

p. 438, C. W.) staff officers of Gen. Meade were ordered by him to report upon the positions of all the army corps on the field, -their artillery, infantry and trains,-and this duty, as to the Third Army Corps, was assigned to Col.

Schriver, Inspector-General. Of course Col. Schriver made his report as to the position of the Third Corps, so that Gen. Meade knew our position, and if it was not satisfactory to him there was ample time to change it conformably to his wishes and plans,

as soon as they were formed. It is therefore established by the foregoing testimony, that the attention of three of the principal staff officers of the army had been directed by Gen. Mende to our left, and to the position of the Third Corps. I refer to Gen. Warren, Chief of Engineers; Gen. Hunt, Chief of Artillery, and Gen. Schriver, Inspector-General. No one of these officers communicated any orders from Gen. Meade to Gen. Sickles respecting the position of the Third Corps, or as to the plans of the commanding General on the 2d of July. Let us now see what

HAD BEEN DONE MEANWHILE BY GEN. SICKLES to inform Gen. Meade as to the situation on the eft, the movements of the enemy, and the position of the Third Corps.

Maj. Alexander Moore (Moore, Jan. 10, 1880, letter), Gen. Sickles's Junior Aid-de-Camp, an intelligent officer of much experience, who had been on the staffs of Kearny and Hooker, reports:

I distinctly recoilect your sending staff officers to Gen. Meade for instructions as to the line you were to occupy with your corps, but you never received I did not advance "in front of the line of the any instructions to my knowledge. I went mystructions, and to inform him that the enemy was left rested on Round Top and my right was in moving to the left of the army, which he did not I recollect distinctly riding around a part of the

line of the Third Corps with yourself and Gen. Hunt, Chief of Artillery of the Army of the Potomae, and you then sent a staff officer, Capt. Fry. I



BREVET MAJ.-GEN. S. W. CRAWFORD. time I went by your directions to see exactly how

I found Smith's New York Battery, supported by Ward's Brigade, which occupied a hill to the right of Little Round Top and a little in front of a small rivulet called Snake Run; this was the extreme left of your line. From this point the enemy could be distinctly seen moving in mass to your left. On returning to you with this information you directed me to proceed at once to Gen. Meade and report the condition of affairs to him; I found Gen. Meade at his headquarters and made my report. He got on his horse and accompanied me toward your line, but before reaching the point where you were the battle had begun. Gen. Meade then directed you personally to call upon the Fifth Corps for any troops you might need to extend the left of your line. Up to the time that I reported to Gen. Meade that the enemy was moving to your left, I do not believe that he expected an attack from that quarter. I have noth ing to add in regard to the position of the Third Corps on the second day of the battle of Gettys-burg forther than that Gen. Meade was kept fully advised by you of all the movements you were making. (Moore, Jan. 10, '80, letter.)

Capt. J. Barelay Fassit, A. D. C. to Maj.-Gen. Birney, commanding First Division, reports (Fassit, June 12, '86, letter):

About noon of July 2 Gen. Birney sent Capt. Briscoe, of his stall, to make a reconnoissance on our front and left. Capt. Briscoe sent in word that the enemy were massing on our left, and had already Il guns in position near a white house on the hill to our left and front. Gen. Birney sent me out to see Briscoe and verify the report, which I did.
You then ordered Gen. Birney to place Graham's
Brigade in the Peach Orchard, and while you and
Gen. Birney and your staff were on the road in the
rear of the Peach Orchard, mounted, Gen. Meade and his staff rode up. He asked what was the ADVANCED THE THIRD CORPS
from half to three-quarters of a mile in front of the line of the Second Corps. The advance on the right was 300 yards—about one-sixth of pooled the statement. The words were hardly out a mile; and on the left Birney advanced to the Devil's Den, 500 yards—less than one-third of a mile. The left being thrown forward to ocbattery came up on a run, unlimbered, and comso stubbornly held by Ward's Brigade and Smith's battery.

menced to reply. That was the last I saw or heard of Gen. Meade on that day on the field. After this conference between Gen. Meade and you, which 5. Nor is Gen. Meade more accurate when he occurred about 3:30 in the afternoon, we were acintimates that his instructions as to the posi- tively engaged with the enemy until about 7:30, when we were relieved by other troops. WHAT AN AID-DE-CAMP SAYS.

Gen. Henry E. Tremaine, my Senior Aid-de-

be carefully considered. Had Gen. Meade in view of my duties as well on the first day formed any plan of battle-offensive or defenis exceedingly improbable that any important At 3 o'clock in the afternoon, a few moments orders affecting the movement or location of your before Gen. Meade came to me on the extreme corps should have been communicated to you left, he telegraphed to Gen. Halleck, at Wash- without more or less knowledge on my part in a short time thereafter. I never heard that it was claimed that any orders were given to you in re-If not attacked, and I can get any positive infor- spect to the precise line you were to assume on the mation of the position of the enemy which will second day of the battle. On the contrary, your justify me in so doing, I shall attack. If I find it movements and dispositions both on the first and hazardous to do so, or am satisfied the enemy is second days of the battle were made as necessitate

before he was killed, and his message by me to Immediately after this dispatch was sent the you, suggesting more than otherwise that you had bester come up, and that without orders you moved your troops from Emmittsburg to Gettysburg. trains, a heavy amusonition train, and a detachment of two brigades and a battery in the rear, of the battle, and it was because of this situation that I visited Gen. Meade's headquarters several From the reconnoissance that I made (on our times in the morning of that day for the purpose of structions as fulght be necessary. To those who imperified, or at least shut off from the road by which they were moving to your lines. The practical question, therefore, presented on the morning your left towards Enunitishing, or whether it should be abandoned to the enemy.

AN INTERVIEW WITH MEADE. I recollect having had an interview with Gen, Meade early in the morning upon the subject, and to have asked, among other things, that cavalry be sent down that road to keep it elear. I recollect, That when the battle of July 2 opened Gen. also, an interview when the question was pre-Sickles's position and Gen. Mcade's plans were sented to Gen. Meade, whether the Emmittsburg STILL IN DOUBT AND UNDETERMINED. | road should be kept open or not? | I recollect distinctly that Gen. Mende did not my